

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 IO-13 /078 W

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R 011106Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8847

INFO USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L COTONOU 1443

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KN, KS, DM

SUBJ: REACTIONS TO PANMUNJOM INCIDENT

REF: STATE 211862

1. ALTHOUGH NORTH KOREANS ENJOY HIGH DEGREE OF INFLUENCE ON GOVERNMENT OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BENIN (GPRB), GPRB HAS MADE NO OFFICIAL COMMENT ON PANMUNJOM INCIDENT. ONLY REFERENCE TO DATE IS REPORT OF PRESS CONFERENCE BY NORTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR HUENG PUBLISHED AUGUST 31 IN GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED DAILY EHUZU. HEUNG REPORTED AS SAYING TENSION AROSE OVER UNILATERAL DECISION TO CUT DOWN TREE IN JOINT SURVEILLANCE SECTOR. WHEN SOUTH KOREANS TURNED DOWN "APPEAL TO REASON" OFFERED BY NORTH KOREAN GUARDS, A CLASH TOOK PLACE. NO MENTION MADE OF DEATH OF U.S. OFFICERS. HEUNG CALLED IT "ANODYNE EVENT" WHICH U.S. HAD "CREATED IN PREPARATION TO INVASION OF NORTH KOREA."

2. WE BELIEVE ONE REASON GPRB HAS NOT GIVEN MORE COVERAGE TO INCIDENT MAY HAVE BEEN TIMELY ISSUANCE BY USIS AUGUST 19 OF PRESS RELEASE CARRYING DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN BROWN'S AUGUST 18 STATEMENT TO ALL MAJOR ELEMENTS OF GPRB. SINCE WE GOT TO GPRB WITH FACTS BEFORE NORTH KOREANS, REGIME MAY HAVE BEEN UNWILLING TO ENTER INTO UNNECESSARY POLEMICS OVER FACTUAL STATEMENT. NORTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR
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WAS REPORTED IN PRESS TO HAVE CALLED ON PRESIDENT KEREKOU

ON AUGUST 23 TO INFORM HIM OF SITUATION. GPRB, HOWEVER,
HAS NOT TAKEN MATTER UP WITH US.
THOMPSON

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Authority: coburnhl
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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